THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Mining activity is done in persuance of the mineral concession granted under the provisions of the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) and rules framed thereunder. Under section 3(e) of the MMDR Act, certain minerals are notified from time to time as minor minerals for which the States are empowered to frame rules for grant of mineral concessions, while for all other minerals (major minerals), the mineral concessions are granted by the State Governments subject to the rules prescribed in Mineral Concession Rules, 1960.

However, mining activities are also subject to other laws of the land including the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and rules framed hereunder and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and rules and notifications issued thereunder. As per the Gazette Notification SO 319(E) dated 7th May, 1992 (Aravali notification) amended *vide* Gazette Notification SO 248(E) dated the 28.2.2003, for specified areas of Aravali range, for all mining processes and operations except mining projects (major minerals) with lease area more than five hectares in the specified areas of the Aravali range, prior permission of the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF), is required, under Aravali notification. For mining projects (major minerals) with lease area more than five hectares prior permission of Ministry of Environment & Forests is required in accordance with MOEF notification No. SO 60(E) dated 27.1.1994 in Aravali hills as well as rest of India.

(b) No, Sir. Ministry of Environment & Forests has informed that there is no proposal to bring any Bill to limit mining in Aravali region.

(c) In view of (b) above, does not arise.

Multi-purpose Identity Cards

*312. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided to issue multi-purpose identity cards to all bonafide citizens above 14 years of age;

(b) whether Government was to launch a pilot project for issuance of I-Cards in seven border States; and

(c) if so, what is the status of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) There is a proposal to issue Multi-purpose national Identity Cards to all the citizens of the country.

(b) and (c) The Government has decided to undertake a Pilot Project on an experimental basis in a few districts/sub-districts of 13 States and Union Territories. The Pilot Project is to be launched in April, 2003 and expected to be completed within one year.

Water to All by 2010

*313. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ministry of Rural Development would involve important personalities such as winner of Megsaysay Award and NGOs in implementation of Water to All by 2010 programme;

(b) if so, whether Government have identified such personalities, to implement the programme; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) to (c) While there is no programme titled "Water to All by 2010", as per the National Agenda for Governance of the Government of India, it is proposed to cover all rural habitations with drinking water supply facilities by the year 2004. Government of India have launched in 1999 sector reforms in the Rural Water Supply for institutionalizing community participation through demand-responsive and decentralized approaches in 67 identified Districts in 26 States. This initiative has been expended as 'Swajaldhara' where the Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats and even beneficiary groups can plan, design and implement rural water supply schemes. The entire rural community, including NGOs and prominent personalities/experts, are to be involved in the implementation of the reforms.